

Cookham

What was Spencer's life in Cookham like prior to the War?

Simple and family-orientated. His life had been connected to a strong religious upbringing and he loved the village life of Cookham. He lived with his brothers and mother and father. As an artist, he preferred to live at Cookham and commute to art college, which led to some jokes being made at his expense.

How had he been brought up?

He was given a classical education, having been taught music by his father, and this led to a love of art. He was also brought up with a strong religious background.

Royal Army Medical Corps and Bristol, 1915

Where did Spencer serve as his first assignment?

Beaufort Hospital in Bristol.

What tasks did he carry out while there?

Orderly, scrubbing floors, carrying and fetching items, cleaning rooms and surfaces.

What did he do in his spare time?

Look for places to hide himself away to read art books and take in quiet reflection by hiding in cupboards or between bath tubs.

Stanley Spencer's wartime experiences

Describe where Spencer fought.

Salonika frontline, Greece and Macedonia.

What did he do while in Macedonia?

Worked for the 68th Field Ambulance, transporting wounded soldiers on travoys. He then joined the 7th Battalion Berkshires to serve on the front line as an infantryman.

How did he view war?

Essentially as a pacifist.

Why was he sent to hospital?

He contracted malaria in October 1918.

Soldier in Macedonia

What news had he heard when he returned home?

He found out that his brother Sydney had been killed.

What role did Spencer have during the Second World War?

He continued to work as a war artist during the War and was given the role of Official War Artist by the government, painting scenes of workers building ships on the River Clyde.

After the War, he married and returned to Cookham to live.

Post-war experiences